

FY 2016 Operating Plan

Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team

National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration



*North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia,
Florida, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands*

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I. Introduction

NOAA's strategic goals and objectives are aligned with the Department of Commerce (DOC) goals and objectives and with Administration priorities. Within this framework, NOAA's regional collaboration network seeks to improve NOAA's productivity and value to customers by articulating and acting on the broader NOAA goals and objectives in terms of priority regional needs and regional contributions.

NOAA's regional collaboration network is comprised of eight regional teams plus support/engagement through NOAA Headquarters and Line Offices. The Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team (SECART) covers NC, SC, GA, FL PR, and USVI. The team is currently comprised of 22 members representing geographic and topical diversity of NOAA staff and partners within the region (Appendix 1).

NOAA's Goals and Objectives

NOAA focuses its activities toward the following Strategic Goals and Enterprise Objectives articulated in the NOAA Strategic Plan:

- Climate Adaptation and Mitigation – An informed society anticipating and responding to climate and its impacts
- Weather-Ready Nation – Society is prepared for and responds to weather-related events
- Healthy Oceans – Vibrant marine fisheries, habitats, and biodiversity sustained within healthy and productive ecosystems
- Resilient Coastal Communities and Economies – Coastal and Great Lakes communities that are environmentally and economically sustainable
- NOAA's Science and Technology Enterprise
- NOAA's Engagement Enterprise
- NOAA's Organization and Administration Enterprise

Regional Collaboration Strategy Map

In 2014, the Regional Collaboration Network completed a "strategy map" to articulate its vision, mission, goals, and strategies to meet its objective in the NOAA Strategy: "Integrated services meeting the evolving demands of regional stakeholders." The Regional Collaboration Network's Strategy map is included in this document as Appendix 2.

SECART Priorities

NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team (SECART) has identified its priorities for FY15-18. These are:

Priority: Improve efficiency and effectiveness of NOAA's mission-execution through enhanced collaboration across NOAA offices and with partners.

- Goal: Address regional priorities by connecting people and resources
- Goal: Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Goal: Improve awareness of NOAA's broad mission responsibilities and regional capabilities to achieve an understanding of, and respect for, the totality of NOAA's work

Priority: Improve Resilience of Communities to Extreme Events and Climate Change

- Goal: Facilitate the development of emerging science and technology solutions to enable regional stakeholders to better plan for and respond to the risks posed by hazards and climate change
- Goal: Facilitate the application of products, services, and knowledge to enhance the capacity of communities to understand, plan for, and respond to risks posed by extreme events and climate change.
- Goal: Enhance organizational awareness and coordination within the region to improve response to a natural or man-made disaster

Priority: Promote the sustainability of the region’s living marine resources and the habitats upon which they depend

- Goal: Improve coordination and focus of coastal and marine habitat conservation and restoration
- Goal: Enhance awareness of risks to living marine resources and habitats

The full FY15-18 Strategy is presented as Appendix 3.

Annual Operating Plan Purpose and Organization

Purpose

The purpose of the Annual Operating Plan (AOP) is to guide and document team activities during the fiscal year. Regional team AOPs form the basis to examine how well the agency is addressing Administration and regional priorities. AOPs also serve as a tool for communicating regionally-informed priorities.

Organization

This AOP for FY2016 addresses national and regional priorities by utilizing an integrative, cross-line office approach, with an emphasis on enhancing coordination and communication within the region. The priority activities of SECART are organized according to the three SECART priorities mentioned above. Activities may address multiple priorities and goals, but are organized within a single priority for the purposes of the AOP. Activity descriptions provide information about the purpose, scope, partners, and budget of the activity. Milestones are associated with deliverables or expected accomplishments.

Regional Collaboration funding from NOAA (\$50K) has been allocated to enable SECART to address priorities. This funding for SECART work has been and will continue to be augmented and leveraged through other programs and funding opportunities. SECART’s FY2016 spend plan is presented in Appendix 4.

II. Team Activities

Priority: Improve efficiency and effectiveness of NOAA's mission-execution through enhanced collaboration across NOAA offices and with partners

Activity A1. Enhance NOAA's mission through strategic engagement with regional partners.

Leaders:

- Geno Olmi (Geno.Olmi@noaa.gov)
- Virginia Fay (Virginia.Fay@noaa.gov)
- David Brown (David.P.Brown@noaa.gov)
- Rich Bandy (Richard.Bandy@noaa.gov)

Key Participants:

- Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs): South Atlantic, Peninsular Florida, and Caribbean.
- Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA) and the Caribbean Regional Association for Ocean Observing (CaRA)
- Sea Grant programs in the region (NC, SC, GA, FL, PR)
- The Governors' South Atlantic Alliance
- South Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Caribbean Fishery Management Council
- The Nature Conservancy and other non-governmental organizations
- Other groups with whom SECART could explore closer connections, if appropriate:
 - SERPPAS – NC, SC, GA, FL, AL, and MS; NOAA, DoD, US Forest Service, USFWS, EPA, all Armed Services, NRCS, USGS
 - SENRLG – NOAA, USFWS, EPA, TVA, DOT, NRCS, BLM, NPS, US Forest Service, USGS, ACOE, and USAEC
 - SARP – 14 southeastern states, NOAA, USFWS, Gulf and Atlantic States Fisheries Commissions, Gulf and South Atlantic Fisheries Management Councils, all SE Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, NGOs, and other local, private, industry, and business sectors
 - ACFHP - composed of fish habitat resource managers, scientists, and communications professionals from 30 different state, federal, tribal and non-governmental agencies

Summary:

Multi-partner coordination activities are occurring in the region focused on ecosystems, sustainability, and economic development integration. These partnerships provide ready

opportunities for inter-agency and state-federal collaborations on issues of mutual interest. Over the last few years, SECART interacted with and provided various levels of support to several ongoing partnership efforts. One such partnership the NOAA in the Caribbean Collaborative is proposed as a separate project in this workplan. Two other partnerships are particularly noteworthy: the Governors' South Atlantic Alliance and the three Landscape Conservation Cooperatives in the region because of our active engagement with them over the past several years.

- Represent NOAA on LCCs in the region
- Continue to support the GSAA, especially through their strategic issue areas
- Monitor other regional partnerships for opportunities to engage.

Landscape Conservation Cooperatives

The Department of Interior launched the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) to better integrate science and management to address climate change and other landscape scale issues. The 22 LCCs collectively form a network of resource managers and scientists who share a common need for scientific information and interest in conservation. Each LCC brings together federal, state, and local governments along with Tribes and First Nations, non-governmental organizations, universities, and interested public and private organizations. Partners work collaboratively to identify best practices, connect efforts, identify science gaps, and avoid duplication through conservation planning and design.

NOAA has a designated representative on most of the 22 LCC Steering Committees, similar to other LCC partners. NOAA's LCC Steering Committee members work to advance the work of NOAA and the LCC network. Three LCCs overlap with the SECART geography. SECART members serve on steering committees for two of the LCCs – South Atlantic and Caribbean – and coordinate closely with Todd Davison, who is the NOAA representative on the Florida Peninsula LCC.

Caribbean Regional Association (CaRA) / Caribbean Coastal Ocean Observing System (CariCOOS) – One of 11 Regional Associations established through IOOS, CaRA is responsible for coordinating coastal and ocean observing activities in the U.S. Caribbean and facilitating dialogue among stakeholders. The Regional Association is guided by user groups in the region and helps ensure that data providers meet those needs.

Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA) – One of 11 Regional Associations established through IOOS, SECOORA is responsible for coordinating coastal and ocean observing activities in the Southeast and facilitating dialogue among stakeholders. The Regional Association is guided by user groups in the region and helps ensure that data providers meet those needs. SECART is an affiliate member of SECOORA. The Executive Director of SECOORA is currently a member of SECART.

Governors' South Atlantic Alliance

The Governors' South Atlantic Alliance (GSAA) is a regional ocean partnership among the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. Its mission is to significantly increase regional collaboration among these South Atlantic states and with federal agency partners and other stakeholders, and to sustain and enhance the environmental, natural resource,

economic, public safety, social, and national defense missions of the respective states and the South Atlantic region as a whole. NOAA is one of three federal co-chairs (Virginia Fay is presently acting as NOAA co-chair). NOAA can help advance collaboration in direct response to coastal and ocean issues identified by the GSAA. NOAA can also explore innovative mechanisms for ecosystem management, integrate coastal and marine spatial planning, integrate coastal and ocean observations, and develop decision-support systems based on policy and science, while emphasizing local, state and federal collaboration.

Caribbean Regional Ocean Partnership

The Caribbean Regional Ocean Partnership (CROP) was created in May 2012 through a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Governors of Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands. The CROP aims to establish mechanisms that will improve regional collaboration on ocean management in order to reduce user conflicts, improve cohesive regional planning, and support healthy communities and ecosystems for present and future generations. A framework for an ecosystem-based management approach will address cumulative effects from anthropogenic activities to ensure the protection, integrity, maintenance, resilience, and restoration of ocean and Coastal Caribbean ecosystems, while promoting multiple uses. The Nature Conservancy is also an active partner in the CROP.

Objectives:

The objectives of this activity are to:

- Serve on steering committees, technical teams and other collaborations as appropriate in support of regional partnerships
- Monitor progress of regional partnerships and identify appropriate opportunities for engagement, responding to region-wide needs
- Utilize SECART's collaborative network to enhance the success of the regional partners
- Increase the level of understanding of NOAA products and services in the region
- Respond to region-wide needs, including coastal and marine spatial planning
- Advance regional and internal collaboration with regional partnerships
- Enhance the success of goals and objectives of the GSAA, through participation on technical teams and support of GSAA activities

Cost/Funding Source: \$2500 of SECART funds. \$1000 to support team member travel to regional workshops (TBD); support Regional Coordinator travel to SALCC Steering Committee meetings and other partnership travel (i.e., SECOORA) (\$1500); in kind support by RC and other team members during engagement with regional partnerships.

SECART Goals/Objectives Met:

Goal 1 Address regional priorities by connecting people and resources.

- Objective 1. Understand the capabilities of NOAA and its partners within the region and facilitate bringing those capabilities to bear on priority issues, consistent with NOAA's mission;
- Objective 2. Convene NOAA and partners together to address specific regional priorities;
- Objective 3. Support and engage regional partnerships to efficiently address shared goals

Goal 2: Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action.

- Objective 1. Understand regional issues and needs and transmit that information to inform NOAA programming;

Key Milestones/Tasks:

- SECART members will participate in these partnerships as appropriate and look to identify opportunities for engagement, if beneficial to NOAA's mission in the region (Q1-4)
- Represent NOAA on the Steering Committees of the South Atlantic, Florida Peninsula, and Caribbean LCC (Q1-4), including participation in steering team calls and annual face-to-face meetings
- Work with relevant NOAA's LCC Coordinator, programs, offices, and Regional Collaboration Teams to coordinate and effectively communicate to the LCC, NOAA's mission interests in landscape/seascape conservation and bring NOAA capabilities to the LCC to assist in the attainment of LCC goals and objectives
- Effectively communicate activities, projects, and opportunities to relevant NOAA programs, offices, and the Regional Collaboration Teams
- Represent NOAA on the GSAA Executive Planning Team and identify opportunities to further support and promote the mutual goals of NOAA and the GSAA.

Activity A2. Advance NOAA's mission through engagement with the NOAA in the Caribbean Collaborative and promote implementation of the NOAA Caribbean Strategy

Leader(s):

- Bill O'Beirne (Bill.O'Beirne@noaa.gov)
- Jeff Payne (Jeff.Payne@noaa.gov)
- David Brown (David.P.Brown@noaa.gov)

Participants:

- NOAA in the Caribbean Steering Committee
- Puerto Rico and USVI Coastal Management Programs
- Caribbean Fisheries Management Council
- Caribbean Landscape Conservation Cooperative
- The Nature Conservancy

Summary:

NOAA has a broad portfolio of activities in the Caribbean region, both nationally and internationally. Given the extent of locations, mission, and partners throughout the region, communication and coordination can be challenging. NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team (SECART) initiated NOAA in the Caribbean (NOAA Carib) with the goal of identifying and responding to local and regional challenges, needs, and opportunities in the Caribbean region through collaboration across NOAA and with non-NOAA partners. NOAA

Carib includes NOAA employees and partners currently active in research, management, training, or other efforts in the Caribbean. NOAA Carib's initial focus has been on Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands; however, the initiative seeks to maintain resource exchanges with Florida and, as appropriate and practicable, with partners in the wider Caribbean.

Significant accomplishments to date include production of the NOAA in the Caribbean Newsletter, one in-person (St. Thomas, May 2012) and one virtual (Jan 2014) partners' meetings, and contributions to and promotion of the NOAA Caribbean Strategy.

Launched in February 2012 as the first product from the new NOAA in the Caribbean Initiative, the NOAA in the Caribbean Newsletter aims to enhance communication and awareness of NOAA's Caribbean activities both within NOAA and with the Caribbean region's managers, partners and decision makers. The newsletter is currently the only one-NOAA outreach product with a focus on the Caribbean region.

In May 2012, NOAA Carib held its first annual meeting in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, to discuss how to best identify and respond to local and regional challenges in the Caribbean with NOAA and non-NOAA partners, including through the NOAA Caribbean Strategy. In Jan-Feb 2014, NOAA Carib used virtual technology and small hub locations to coordinate with our Caribbean partners, both within and outside of NOAA for our second annual meeting. Reports from these first two workshops are available. An in-person meeting with partners is planned for spring 2016.

In FY14, the [NOAA Caribbean Strategy](#) was approved by Dr. Kathy Sullivan, NOAA's Undersecretary. The NOAA Caribbean Strategy lays out three goals for meeting NOAA's mission in the Caribbean region. The Strategy has three interconnected goals:

- Improve conservation and management of ocean and coastal ecosystems and resources;
- Strengthened understanding of, and adaptation to, a changing climate;
- Enhanced multi-hazard monitoring, forecasting, and risk management.

SECART and the NOAA Carib collaborative provide a focus for NOAA on implementation of the Strategy and will work with partners in the execution of the Strategy's short-term objectives, as part of a broader regional coordination effort in the Caribbean. As we work to implement elements of the NOAA Caribbean Strategy, we must of course be cognizant of new and evolving issues and concerns (e.g., ESA listing of coral species).

Objectives:

The objectives of this activity are to:

- Participate in the NOAA in the Caribbean Steering Committee.
- Work with the NOAA Carib Steering Committee to maintain production of the NOAA in the Caribbean Newsletter.
- Participate with the NOAA in the Caribbean Steering Committee to plan and conduct a partners meeting in Puerto Rico in the spring/summer of 2016.
- Provide funds to the support products and services of the NOAA Caribbean Collaborative
- Advance specific short-term implementation of the goals of the NOAA Caribbean Strategy

Cost/Funding Source: \$7500 of FY16 SECART resources - \$3000 is allocated for support of the NOAA Carib intern or translation services (as decided by SC), \$3000 is allocated for SECART member travel to the NOAA Carib Partners meeting, and \$1500 is allocated for RC travel.

Additional funds from NESDIS/CEI (FY13) provided to the Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies (Univ. of Miami) will be used to initiate projects under the Climate Goal of the NOAA Caribbean Strategy.

\$2,000 of FY15 SECART funds provided to the Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies (Univ. of Miami) will be used to support student intern, translation services or the constituents meeting – as determined by the NOAA Carib Steering Committee..

SECART Goals/Objectives Met :

Goal 1 Address regional priorities by connecting people and resources.

- Objective 1. Understand the capabilities of NOAA and its partners within the region and facilitate bringing those capabilities to bear on priority issues, consistent with NOAA's mission;
- Objective 2. Convene NOAA and partners together to address specific regional priorities;
- Objective 3. Support and engage regional partnerships to efficiently address shared goals

Goal 2: Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action.

- Objective 1. Understand regional issues and needs and transmit that information to inform NOAA programming;

Key Milestones/Tasks:

- Work with the NOAA Carib Steering Committee to better define and articulate the relationship between SECART and NOAA Carib concerning our mutual goals of understanding and responding to partner needs in the US Caribbean. Communicate this relationship to participants at the NOAA Carib Partners Meeting in 2016.
- Assist the NOAA Carib Steering Team with the development and delivery of two issues of the NOAA in the Caribbean Newsletter (Q2, Q4) through participation on the editorial committee and funding of Spanish translation services.
- Provide a \$3K funding opportunity to the NOAA Carib Steering Committee with the request that they propose a spend plan to be approved by SECART before a transfer of funds. As part of funding we request that the group develop an accomplishments summary representing progress toward objectives in the NOAA Carib Strategy.
- Participate (through the NOAA Carib Steering Committee and the meeting planning team) in the planning and execution of a NOAA Carib Constituents Workshop in May 2016 (Q1-3). Have SECART members attend workshop to better understand partner issues and concerns.
- Based on the outcomes of the NOAA Carib Constituents Meeting, identify near-term priorities consistent with the NOAA Carib Strategy for SECART to “promote” as NOAA priorities in the region. Priorities and potential projects that result will be briefed to the Regional Collaboration Advisory Group.

- Support NOAA and partner participation in a Caribbean climate data scoping workshop hosted by NCEI in Asheville NC (Q2)

Activity A3. Represent NOAA’s broad mission capabilities and accomplishments in the region and facilitate two-way flow of information between the region and NOAA leadership.

Leaders:

- Geno Olmi (Geno.Olmi@noaa.gov)
- Rich Bandy (Richard.Bandy@noaa.gov)
- Virginia Fay (Virginia.Fay@noaa.gov)
- Erica Rule (Erica.Rule@noaa.gov)

Participants:

- Outreach & Communications Team (S. Fangman, A. Cline, E. Rule, G. Olmi)
- All SECART members
- PPI

Summary:

Regional collaboration teams are one of the few entities within NOAA, and especially within the regions, that represent all of NOAA. A role of SECART is to expand awareness of NOAA’s mission responsibilities, capabilities and accomplishments, as an agency, not just for a particular office. NOAA staff in the region are necessarily focused on their particular job function, but to the extent that they better understand the totality of NOAA’s mission and what other NOAA staff in the region are doing, the better equipped they are to represent NOAA. Similarly, it is to NOAA’s benefit that our partners and stakeholders are more aware of how NOAA works to improve their lives.

Communicating Regional Programs and Priorities

SECART will conduct a number of communications and outreach activities targeted at promoting awareness and understanding of NOAA’s varying capabilities, services and programmatic priorities as they relate to regional and national priorities; and gather feedback to improve products and services. SECART will continue to build, maintain or enhance “One-NOAA in the region” outreach/inreach materials and tools previously initiated, such as regional factsheets, presentations, the SECART website, and the kiosk. SECART outreach and communications activities will require the support, input and feedback of the full SECART team.

SECART will engage regularly with NOAA staff and partners in the region to maintain an understanding of programs and priorities. Utilize this information (regional intelligence) to inform NOAA understanding and programming. Help convey NOAA priorities to staff and partners; enable implementation of NOAA priorities in the region, including initiatives such as Habitat Blueprint and Sentinel Site Cooperatives.

SECART is called upon to provide information about and from stakeholders and NOAA entities in the region, and also to serve as ambassadors for the agency and department. SECART will engage NOAA staff and partners within the region to enhance the flow of information, especially concerning priorities and needs. One mechanism that the Regional Collaboration Teams have used to convey timely information about the regions are the “Regional Landscapes” – documents that attempt to provide a profile of the region concerning interests to NOAA. SECART will continue to produce annual updates of the profile for the Southeast and Caribbean Region to NOAA leadership and planners to (hopefully) influence NOAA’s understanding of and response to the region’s needs.

Congressional Roundtable event(s)

In FY16, SECART will conduct one, and possibly two, “roundtable briefing” for congressional staff in the region. The purpose of such an event is to expand awareness of NOAA’s impact in a particular state or sub-region. Following the model used by the North Atlantic Team, NOAA staff would be “paired” with state and local agency, university stakeholders to educate Congressional district staff about timely and relevant issues in their region. The goal of the briefings will be to show how NOAA provides products, services, and information to address an issue, and how stakeholders then use that information to inform actions related to the issue. An outcome of this activity should be to make district staff more aware of the depth and breadth of NOAA’s mission in the region, especially in topical areas where NOAA’s expertise is not as well known. We will conduct an event in south Florida (Miami area) and explore the potential of also holding a roundtable in North Carolina.

Supporting NOAA Leadership and National Initiatives

NOAA Leadership (including Line Office leadership) travels to the regions to attend events (conferences, dedications, etc.), to meet with stakeholders, and to engage with NOAA staff. Regional Collaboration Teams can provide valuable logistical and information intelligence to improve the value of such visits. Regional Coordinators have established a relationship with the Program Coordination Office to better assist in planning and execution of such visits. SECART will provide such assistance when NOAA Leadership visits the region.

Objectives:

The objectives of this activity are to:

- Engage with regional staff, partners, and stakeholders to strengthen collaborative ties and build awareness in the region of NOAA’s mission responsibilities and capabilities
- Through this enhanced awareness, spur additional communication, coordination and collaboration among NOAA staff and with partners and stakeholders.
- Utilize outreach materials to enhance such awareness of NOAA work in the region
- Conduct, at least one “congressional roundtable” briefing in the region to showcase local and state engagement with NOAA and use of NOAA’s products and services.
- Identify any regional emerging issues that NOAA should be aware of and communicate that information to NOAA leadership
- Serve NOAA and the Department of Commerce as needed for requests for information and services from the region
- Represent NOAA in the region

- Assist in enhancing the value of visits to the region by NOAA Leadership

Cost/Funding Source: \$5000 from SECART funds. \$2000 for RC travel; \$1000 for Team Lead travel; \$2000 for other costs associated with conducting roundtable events. In kind support from SECART members; coordinator travel for outreach captured under other regional enterprise categories.

SECART Goals/Objectives Met:

Goal 1 Exchange both national and regional insights to inform action.

- Objective 1. Understand regional issues and needs and transmit that information to inform NOAA programming;
- Objective 2. Enhance NOAA leadership's understanding of the region's issues and NOAA capabilities in the region;
- Objective 3. Help regional staff and partners understand NOAA's mission, goals, capabilities and constraints;
- Objective 4. Provide guidance and support in the development and implementation of NOAA-wide regional programs.

Goal 3: Improve awareness of NOAA's broad mission responsibilities and regional capabilities to achieve an understanding of, and respect for, the totality of NOAA's work.

- Objective 1. Elevate the awareness and value of NOAA through strategic partnerships, outreach, and communication;
- Objective 2. Build NOAA's interdisciplinary capacity and organizational integration;
- Objective 3. Improve leadership understanding of the capabilities and interconnectedness of NOAA expertise in the region;
- Objective 4. Assist in developing and tailoring engagement strategies for the regional implementation of national priorities.

Key Milestones/Tasks:

- Regional Landscape Analysis document updated for FY17 planning (Q2)
- Quarterly accomplishments to PPI (Q1-4)
- Weekly updates, as appropriate, to PPI for accomplishments, regional news and upcoming events (Q1-4)
- As needed assistance to enhance NOAA leadership visits to the region (Q1-4)
- Engage with NOAA staff and partners to understand regional issues and concerns
- Respond to specific requests for information or support from NOAA HQ or DOC (Q1-4)
- Inform HQ of issues, concerns and events important to the region (Q1 – Q4)
- Stay aware of regional events and issues of interest to NOAA (Q1-4)
- Enhance leadership visits to the region by providing “local” intelligence with an inclusive prospective.
- Develop slide deck with overview of SEART, FY15 accomplishments, and FY16 activities to use for outreach (Q1)
- Develop “fact sheet” about SECART's FY16 activities (Q1-2)
- Enhance SECART web site (Q1 – Q4)
- Update One-NOAA content for kiosk and track usage (Q1 – Q4)
- Update “NOAA in region” fact sheet (Q3)

- Meet with NOAA staff and partners in region to enhance awareness of NOAA's responsibilities and capabilities within the region (Q1-4)
- Conduct one "congressional roundtable" briefing in Miami area (Q3) and explore conducting a second one in North Carolina
- Monitor and assist SECART working groups with outreach support as needed (Q1 – Q4)
- Make One-NOAA outreach materials available for use by staff in the region (Q1 – Q4)
- Identify and utilize various forums to display One-NOAA outreach materials to partners and stakeholders (Q1 – Q4)

Activity A4. Enhance the capacity of SECART to lead organizational integration within the region

Leaders:

- Geno Olmi (Geno.Olmi@noaa.gov)
- Rich Bandy (Richard.Bandy@noaa.gov)
- Virginia Fay (Virginia.Fay@noaa.gov)
- Chris Taylor (Chris.Taylor@noaa.gov)
- Erica Rule (Erica.Rule@noaa.gov)
- Ed Kearns (Ed.Kearns@noaa.gov)

Summary: For regional collaboration teams to be effective, they must have regular and effective coordination and communication. SECART maintains monthly conference calls and semi-annual face-to-face or virtual meetings as the key opportunities to exchange information and discuss SECART's mission, strategy, and effectiveness. SECART continues to refine the purpose and format of meetings to be more productive and efficient.

During FY16, SECART will hold two face-to-face meetings. The winter meeting will occur in January in the Jacksonville/St. Augustine, FL area. The meeting will focus on status of SECART activities and learning about NOAA and partner activities in the northeast Florida area (e.g., the GTM Estuarine Reserve and the Port of Jacksonville). The summer meeting (tentatively planned for Charleston) will focus on progress of SECART projects, team business, and identifying FY17 priorities and activities. In addition to monthly calls and meetings, team members communicate frequently via phone and email.

During FY14-FY15, SECART completed its FY15-18 Strategy, adopted new strategic priority areas, and changed its workgroup structure to match. The strategy and matching workgroup structure guide SECART investment. Development and execution of the team's Annual Operating Plan is a significant task within this activity. While much of the execution is contained in other AOP Activities, the planning for and development of the AOP is captured here. As part of this process, SECART will continually evaluate regional priorities of stakeholders. Through SECART workgroups and leadership, we will execute our Annual Operating Plan to provide integrated services to the region.

Objectives

The objectives of this activity are to:

- Maintain and improve communication and coordination of the regional team
- Manage and improve team operations
- Maintain and enhance priority area work groups
- Complete the FY16 Operating Plan (Q1)
- Effectively execute the FY16 Operating Plan
- Begin development of the FY17 Operating Plan (Q4)
- Facilitate team functioning to achieve better coordination and integration within the region.

Cost/Funding Source: \$13,000 to support team member travel to SECART meetings (if their LO is unable to cover travel costs); \$1000 for Regional Coordinator travel in support of team operations; in-kind support provided in team member time.

SECART Goals/Objectives Met:

Goal 1 Address regional priorities by connecting people and resources.

- Objective 1. Understand the capabilities of NOAA and its partners within the region and facilitate bringing those capabilities to bear on priority issues, consistent with NOAA's mission;
- Objective 2. Convene NOAA and partners together to address specific regional priorities;
- Objective 3. Support and engage regional partnerships to efficiently address shared goals

Goal 2: Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action.

- Objective 1. Understand regional issues and needs and transmit that information to inform NOAA programming;
- Objective 3. Help regional staff and partners understand NOAA's mission, goals, capabilities and constraints;

Goal 3: Improve awareness of NOAA's broad mission responsibilities and regional capabilities to achieve an understanding of, and respect for, the totality of NOAA's work.

- Objective 1. Elevate the awareness and value of NOAA through strategic partnerships, outreach, and communication;
- Objective 2. Build NOAA's interdisciplinary capacity and organizational integration;
- Objective 3. Improve leadership understanding of the capabilities and interconnectedness of NOAA expertise in the region;

Key Milestones/Tasks:

- FY16 Annual Operating Plan with spend plan (Q1)
- Present AOP to the Advisory Group (Q1)
- Draft FY17 Annual Operating Plan with spend plan (Q4)
- Winter SECART meeting (Q2)
- Summer SECART meeting (Q4)
- Convene monthly team calls and distribute notes (Q1 – Q4)
- Assist with success of work groups (Q1 – Q4)

Activity A5. Improve the capacity of NOAA's inter-regional and national integrated services

Leaders:

- Geno Olmi (Geno.Olmi@noaa.gov)
- Rich Bandy (Richard.Bandy@noaa.gov)
- Virginia Fay (Virginia.Fay@noaa.gov)

Participants:

- Regional Team Leads and Coordinators
- PPI
- Regional Collaboration Advisory Group

Summary: Regional collaboration is a network of networks and it is imperative to maintain the networks at all levels: within the region, but also nationally. Regional collaboration teams report to the NOAA Executive Panel (NEP), which is led by the Deputy Undersecretary for Operations and includes the deputy assistant administrators of each line office as well as other programmatic and administrative offices within NOAA. SECART will work closely with the other regional teams, PPI, and the NEP to advance regional collaboration at all levels.

SECART will remain active in bi-weekly Regional Coordinator calls, monthly Regional Team Lead calls, and other activities that serve to coordinate and integrate the network. The SECART Team Lead and RC will participate in the annual Regional Collaboration Workshop (Nov, St. Petersburg, FL). The SECART RC will help plan and participate in the annual RC meeting (TBD). Finally, SECART will explore opportunities to work with the North Atlantic Regional Team and the Gulf of Mexico Regional Team to identify fruitful areas of integration.

Objectives:

The objectives of this activity are to:

- Improve inter-regional coordination and identify any regional emerging issues that SECART can help address
- Support the NEP and PPI in oversight responsibilities, and influence strategic direction setting, for NOAA regional collaboration
- Help plan and execute the annual Regional Coordinator meeting (TBD)
- Help plan and execute the annual Regional Collaboration Workshop (Nov)
- Continue participation in network-wide coordination activities (calls, meetings, etc.)
- Pursue opportunities for cross-regional coordination on topics of mutual interest

Cost/Funding Source: \$4000 of SECART funds allocated as \$2500 for Regional Coordinator travel (Annual ReCo workshop, Regional Coordinator meeting, and attending other RCT meetings) and \$1500 to support SECART Team Lead travel to the annual ReCo workshop. Also, in kind support of team members; time of Coordinator and Team Lead.

SECART Goals/Objectives Met:

Goal 2: Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action.

- Objective 1. Understand regional issues and needs and transmit that information to inform NOAA programming;
- Objective 3. Help regional staff and partners understand NOAA's mission, goals, capabilities and constraints;

Goal 3: Improve awareness of NOAA's broad mission responsibilities and regional capabilities to achieve an understanding of, and respect for, the totality of NOAA's work.

- Objective 1. Elevate the awareness and value of NOAA through strategic partnerships, outreach, and communication;
- Objective 2. Build NOAA's interdisciplinary capacity and organizational integration;
- Objective 4. Assist in developing and tailoring engagement strategies for the regional implementation of national priorities

Key Milestones/Tasks:

- Regional Coordinator meeting (Q3)
- National Regional Collaboration Workshop (Q1)
- Quarterly and annual reports of accomplishments (Q1-4)
- Participate in bi-weekly Regional Coordinator calls (Q1 – Q4)
- Participate in monthly Regional Team Lead calls (Q1 – Q4)
- Support PPI as needed to further regional collaboration (Q1 – Q4)
- Participate in Strategic Execution and Evaluation process as appropriate to advocate for addressing regional priorities (Q1 – Q4)
- Explore opportunities with the NART and GoMRCT for better coordination on topics of mutual interest.

Priority: Improve resilience of communities to extreme events and climate change

Activity B1. Completion of SECART/Sea Grant Storm Surge Measurement Project.

Leader(s):

Rich Bandy (Richard.Bandy@noaa.gov)

Geno Olmi (Geno.Olmi@noaa.gov)

Participants:

Scott Kennedy (NWS WFO Morehead City, NC)

David Newcomer (NOAA NGS Florida retired)

Spencer Rogers (NC Sea Grant)

Brian McCallum (USGS GA)

Mark Dickman (USGS FL)

Scott Lokken (NOAA NGS NC)

Cheryl Summers (GA Sea Grant)

Objectives/Summary:

The goal of this effort is to improve reliability of obtaining post storm information on storm surge inundation following significant events to improve modeling efforts as well as impact identification and communication by the National Weather Service.

This is an extension of a multi-year project funded through a Sea Grant - Regional Team Grant. This year's activities will be to complete USGS/Sea Grant collaboration and training workshops in SC and Florida. Workshops will be modeled off of successful workshops held last year in Beaufort, NC and Miami, FL. 5 GPS Survey units were purchased last year and staged at Sea Grant Programs in NC, SC, GA, FL, and Puerto Rico. They will be shared with NWS Offices to assist with benchmarking locations that would be prone to large surges and could yield good high water marks, as well as measuring high water mark finds after a storm. We will plan to hold at least two more workshops, one in Charleston, SC, and another in Florida to bring together USGS, Sea Grant, and NWS staff to plan the best locations for USGS gauge deployment and to train on the methodology to add to that with high water mark surveys using our GPS equipment. About \$4370 remains from grant funding, but we will need to offset some of that with SECART funds for federal travel. Fed travel for the workshops could be in the \$3000 range. We would scale the workshops and travel offered based on availability of funding.

Cost/Funding Source: SECART funds of \$3000 for federal travel will supplement the remaining \$4373 from the original Regional Collaboration Grant (which currently resides at University of Georgia Sea Grant).

SECART Goals/Objectives Met

Goal 1: Facilitate the development of emerging science and technology solutions to enable regional stakeholders to better plan for and respond to the risks posed by hazards and climate change.

- Objective 3: Encourage and facilitate the transition of research to develop societally-relevant applications

Goal 2: Facilitate the application of products, services, and knowledge to enhance the capacity of communities to understand, plan for, and respond to risks posed by hazards and climate change.

- Objective 2: Facilitate the application of science and tools in communities to assist with risk identification and the development of mitigation and adaptation strategies

Key Milestones/Tasks:

- Plan and execute a workshop in Charleston, SC with USGS, Sea Grant, NWS WFO Charleston, and NOAA OCM staff, and potentially other academic partners
- Plan and execute a workshop in Florida with USGS, Sea Grant, NWS WFO Jacksonville, Melbourne, Tampa, and Tallahassee Offices and potentially other academic partners.

Activity B2. Hurricane / Climate Resilience Webinar Series.

Leader(s):

Erica Rule

Partners:

Roberto Garcia (MIC WFO San Juan)
Rich Bandy
Kyle Ward
Dan Brown (NHC Hurricane Specialist)
Geno Olmi

Objectives/Summary:

The goal of this effort is to educate key partners about NOAA forecast products such as the seasonal climate outlook, improvements in hurricane and storm surge forecasting efforts, or potentially other hazards, while promoting awareness of cross line office activities and SECART involvement.

Hurricane webinars have been a very successful effort in the past and should be continued to help inform NOAA partners and stakeholders of the latest products related to climate and tropical cyclones. The project team is adding a component to the webinars on regional climate impacts and forecasts, largely stemming from a very strong winter El Nino. This would help make the effort more cross-LO in nature. We also look forward to serving the Spanish-speaking community in the region by offering the hurricane webinars in Spanish for a second year. Webinars will be recorded and, along with presentation materials, posted on our SECART Website. We will promote these across a wide range of partners, leveraging contacts from Kyle Ward in the marine community and potentially, cross promoting with the SE and Caribbean Climate Community of Practice, and engaging the Caribbean 5Cs. A post-webinar survey of up to eight attendees will also be conducted after each webinar, based on recommendations from the Climate Program Office, to better gauge impact and to help tailor future webinar content to constituent needs.

Our tentative schedule for webinars is as follows:

- November 19: El Nino in the Southeast; Speakers: Victor Murphy (NOAA National Weather Service) Chip Konrad (Southeast Regional Climate Center) Jon Gottschalck (NOAA National Weather Service)
- April or May: NHC and WFO product updates; Tentative speaker: Dan Brown (NHC)
- Mid-May: Storm Surge product updates; Tentative speaker: Robbie Berg (NHC)
- May or June; Spanish language webinar; NHC product updates; Tentative speakers: Roberto Garcia (WFO - PR) and Todd Kimberlain (NHC)
- July: Regional hurricane season related activities, Possible topics: Hurricane Research updates (AOML/HRD), Post-storm navigation response/port openings (Coast Survey), Wave Run-Up (Carlos or Andre Van der Westhuysen)

Cost/Funding Source: SECART will leverage existing staff expertise within the region to plan and execute the webinars. No SECART funds committed to this effort.

SECART Goals/Objectives Met :

Goal 2: Facilitate the application of products, services, and knowledge to enhance the capacity of communities to understand, plan for, and respond to risks posed by hazards and climate change.

- Objective 1: Target outreach and communication efforts to facilitate delivery of resilience-relevant information to communities

Key Milestones/Tasks/Deliverables:

- Assemble planning team
- Select topics, speakers, and dates
- Promote webinars widely
- Execute webinars
- Record and Post on SECART Website
- Conduct post-webinar survey

Activity B3. Engage and support the Southeast and Caribbean Climate Community of Practice.

Leader(s):

Geno Olmi
Ellen Mecray

Partners:

Bethney Ward
Liz Fly (SC Sea Grant & Carolinas Integrated Science Assessments)
David Brown
Stephanie Fauver (NOS OCM)
Climate CoP Steering Committee

Objectives/Summary:

SECART and Sea Grant have partnered to build a Climate Community of Practice (CCoP) for extension specialists and coastal managers in the region. The purpose of the CCoP is to enhance the capacity of the community by sharing accurate and timely information, tools, interpretation, and assistance on climate issues. The CCoP is now led by a Steering Team made up of climate professionals in the region. SECART members Ward and Olmi serve on the Steering Team.

During FY16, the Southeast and Caribbean CCOP will continue the popular webinar series that was started in FY15. The webinar series addresses key adaptation strategies for the region (such as the Community Rating System). Also in FY 16, the CCOP will hold its third in-person workshop (tentatively scheduled for April 2016 in Tybee Island, GA). We were successful with our application to Sea Grant's request for proposals to support workshops and conferences. Our

first two workshops (in 2010 and 2012) were very successful. We appreciate funds from the National Sea Grant Office to make the third workshop possible. As with the previous two workshops, we will focus on sharing actionable information and building the community of practice to serve as a resource for the region. Finally, during FY16, we will look to have a presence at the Carolinas Climate Adaptation Conference, to be held September 2016. SECART can use its network to help identify appropriate presenters and participants from the region for both of these meetings.

Cost/Funding Source: SECART is allocating \$2100 for this activity; \$1500 is allocated to support SECART member (TBD) travel to the SE&Car CCOP workshop; \$600 is for RC travel to the workshop. \$20,000 was awarded to the Community of Practice (via SC Sea Grant) which will be used to host the workshop and provide travel support for some state and local participants.

SECART Goals/Objectives Met

Goal 2: Facilitate the application of products, services, and knowledge to enhance the capacity of communities to understand, plan for, and respond to risks posed by hazards and climate change.

- Objective 3: Sustain and enhance the Southeast and Caribbean Climate Community of Practice as a forum for improving climate and resilience related outreach

Key Milestones/Tasks:

- Continue engagement with CCOP Steering Team
- Participate on the Workshop Planning Team
- Participate in the execution of the CCOP Workshop
- Participate in development of workshop products
- Provide travel support for NOAA personnel to attend CCoP related meeting in the region.
- Participate in developing the CCoP webinar series
- Plan and conduct CCOP activities related to the Carolinas Climate Adaptation Conference.

Activity B4. Improve inter-NOAA communication and understanding of responses to large scale disasters within the SECART region.

Leader(s):

Geno Olmi (Geno.Olmi@noaa.gov)

Kyle Ward (Kyle.Ward@noaa.gov)

Partners:

Jeff Payne

Roberto Garcia

Scott Lokken

Objectives/Summary:

The goal of this project is to improve internal NOAA understanding of various line office roles in disaster response, thereby increasing capacity for more comprehensive and coordinated response. It is clear that those NOAA personnel charged with representing the agency in disaster response know their lines of communication internally and with other response agencies. But how might other parts of the agency support this role? How might we coordinate with other NOAA partners?

This is a long term goal that would be completed in stages. During FY15 we had opening discussions with Brad Benggio, the Science Support Coordinator in Miami, FL for the Office of Response and Restoration. Brad participated in the SECART meeting in Miami and helped the team better understand his responsibilities as well as others in the region. SECART's Regional Coordinator also traveled to Mobile, AL and met with Charlie Henry, Director of NOAA's Gulf of Mexico Disaster Response Center to talk about potential role for the SECART in pre-disaster coordination and planning.

During FY16, we want to continue the conversation. Based on previous discussions we could potentially develop anything from a webinar to small conference to guide a series of table top exercises to bring NOAA entities within the region together to make them better prepared to deal with a disaster. We recommend a virtual discussion with a small group working with the Science Support Coordinators and potentially having a devoted session to discussing this topic with the entire SECART group.

One possible product/outcome could be development of a "response directory and guide" fashioned after the one developed in the Great Lakes Region following the 2010 Enbridge oil spill. The guide provides contact information for topical specialists and outlined who has direct responsibilities in the event of a spill or other disaster. No such resource currently exists for our region.

Cost/Funding Source: SECART will leverage existing staff expertise within the region to execute this and has allocated \$800 to cover potential travel related costs of the RC or others, as needed.

SECART Goals/Objectives Met

Goal 3: Enhance organizational awareness and coordination within the region to improve response to a natural or man-made disaster.

- Objective 1: Identify agency capabilities within the region for response to disasters
- Objective 2: Improve communication among appropriate NOAA entities both within and outside the region for a better understanding of capabilities and roles during a disaster response

Key Milestones/Tasks:

- Collaborate with Scientific Support Coordinators for the region, Brad Benggio and Frank Csulak, to identify opportunities to improve NOAA's overall response capability, mostly related to pre-disaster planning

- Hold conversation with NOAA's Disaster Response Center to further identify opportunities for enhancing regional response capabilities.
- Scope more detailed goals for project and realistic SECART role
- Develop 2-3 year implementation plan for priority activities.

Priority: Promote the sustainability of the region's living marine resources and the habitats upon which they depend

Activity C1. Enhance coordination of benthic habitat mapping prioritization, planning, and activities by NOAA and partners in the Southeast US

SECART Lead(s):

Chris Taylor (Chris.Taylor@noaa.gov)

Virginia Fay (Virginia.Fay@noaa.gov)

Participants:

Adam Bode (NOAA OCM)

Mary Conley (TNC)

Kristine Cherry (GSAA)

Kyle Ward (NOS/OCS, SECART)

Debra Hernandez (SECOORA/SECART)

Other Partners:

NOAA staff and partners, state or territorial coastal managers and academic research partners in the region, particularly members of the Healthy Ecosystems Technical Team in GSAA and mapping coordination conducted by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

Summary:

Offices in NOAA conduct seafloor mapping to support safe navigation (OCS), ocean planning (OCM and NCCOS) and resources assessments (NMFS). Various offices, agencies and institutes use prioritization planning tools to identify areas previously surveyed and prioritize mapping effort within NOAA to ensure efficient use and reduce duplication of government efforts and assets to fulfill regional mapping needs. SECART can assist and facilitate greater awareness of the mapping activities conducted by NOAA in the SE Region. The SECART can also facilitate access to online archives, data viewers and mapping prioritization tools for NOAA offices and our partners in the US Caribbean and the Southeast US (emphasis on SE US since other coordination is under way in Caribbean through Coral Program). This activity will improve coordination between NOAA offices and result in more efficient use of government ship time use for habitat mapping in the SECART region.

Objectives:

- Host workshop in Q2 to assemble existing seafloor mapping data inventory and identify mapping requirements and priorities in the SE.
 - Attendees will provide data from home office surveys, including data available on NOAA archives, other federal agencies, and academic institutions
 - Attendees will have identified mapping priorities for research gaps or management needs
 - Attendees will discuss requirements for habitat mapping in the SE and begin to develop a white paper for distribution to NOAA and partners to consider where hydrographic surveys can include additional parameters for seafloor habitat interpretation

Cost/Funding Source: \$7,500 of SECART funds for venue (if necessary) and to support participant travel. \$2,500 cost share from MNFS Southeast Regional Office to support workshop facilitation and development of white paper.

SECART Goals/Objectives Met:

Goal: Improve coordination and focus on coastal marine habitat conservation and restoration.

- Objective 2: Improve awareness of NOAA's mapping activities in the region and access to mapping products;
- Objective 3: Promote development of tools to identify emerging habitat mapping priorities for NOAA programs and partners

Key Milestones/Deliverables and Tasks:

- One-page summary of existing mapping activities and inventories in the region (possibly available through OCS) (Q3)
 - Develop materials on habitat mapping activities and planning instructions for SECART members to carry to line-office
 - Confer with NOAA offices conducting mapping in the Caribbean and SE US
- Outreach to NOAA offices and partners (Q2-4).
 - Identify conference call, webinar or in-person meeting to inventory benthic habitat mapping needs
 - Facilitate evaluation of mapping prioritization and planning tools like the SeaSketch project managed by Office of Coast Survey and a customized tool developed by NCCOS
- Initial inventory of mapping needs in the SE US (Q4).

Activity C2. Support implementation of Habitat Blueprint Focus Areas in the Southeast and Caribbean.**SECART Lead(s):**

Virginia Fay (Virginia.Fay@noaa.gov)

Aleta Hohn (Aleta.Hohn@noaa.gov)

Geno Olmi (Geno.Olmi@noaa.gov)

Bethney Ward (Bethney.Ward@noaa.gov)

Summary:

Two sites were selected for NOAA's Habitat Blueprint Focus Areas in the Southeast and Caribbean region. The two focus areas are Biscayne Bay in southeast Florida and the Northeast Reserves/Culebra in Puerto Rico. SECART is well-equipped to provide regional knowledge and connections to stakeholders through direct participation in the Habitat Areas.

Proposed conservation activities for Biscayne Bay include reducing the frequency and intensity of algal blooms; restoring, improving and conserving essential and critical habitat for fish and protected species; restoring and maintaining sustainable fish stocks; reducing the impact of marine debris; and promoting reduction of hardened shoreline structures. Partners and stakeholders have been identified and engaged, including: Biscayne Bay Regional Restoration and Coordination Team, Biscayne Bay National Park, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the Miami Water Keeper (NOAA Grant recipient to support the HFA). The implementation plan writing team has been active for several months and has developed refined goals and objectives and a logic model to guide actions. The implementation plan should be ready for presentation to the NOAA Habitat Conservation Team in late Q1 or early Q2.

Proposed conservation activities for the Northeast Reserves/Culebra include expanding coral habitat restoration; reducing land-based sources of pollution to improve water quality and enhance wetlands, mangroves, seagrasses, and coral reef habitats; and reducing impacts of recreational use of coastal and marine habitats and resources. NOAA will protect and restore coastal habitats and resources within the Northeast Reserves and Culebra Island through conservation projects, management based monitoring and research, and training and education programs. Key partners include: Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, Puerto Rico Sea Grant, the Caribbean Fishery Management Council, and The Nature Conservancy. The implementation team is making good progress and the implementation plan should be completed (for review) in Q1. While no SECART members are part of the Puerto Rico HFA team, we will stay informed of their progress through the HFA leads from NOS OCM and NMFS OHC, and offer assistance as appropriate.

Objectives:

- SECART will continue to assist with implementation of conservation priorities in the Habitat Focus Areas of Biscayne Bay, Florida and Northeast Reserve, Puerto Rico
- SECART members Olmi and Fay are active on the Biscayne Bay implementation plan team.
- We will support, through supplemental funding from SERO, a facilitated workshop to bring partners together to help shape the Biscayne Bay HFA implementation plan
- SECART will stay informed of the progress and successes of the Puerto Rico HFA and provide assistance as appropriate. In addition, we will serve as a link between the HFAs and the NOAA Caribbean collaborative.

Cost/Funding Source: No SECART funds are allocated for this activity. Supplemental funding from SERO has been offered to support a facilitated partners meeting for the Biscayne Bay HFA.

SECART Goals/Objectives Met:

Goal: Improve coordination and focus on coastal marine habitat conservation and restoration.

- Objective: Promote NOAA's Habitat Blueprint Framework and regional habitat conservation initiatives in the Southeast US and Caribbean.

Key Milestones/Deliverables and Tasks:

- Support NOAA with local roll-out of Focus Area selections; identify staff and partners best suited to serve on respective implementation team (Q1-2)
- Assist with drafting Biscayne Bay implementation plan for approval by NOAA (Q2-4)
 - Participate in developing implementation plans for Biscayne Bay Focus Area
 - Assist coordination with area stakeholders to implement the plan.
 - Note: Biscayne Bay Implementation Plan also being developed during Q1, but SECART not directly involved)

Activity C3. Support the North Carolina Sentinel Site Cooperative.**SECART Lead(s):**

Aleta Hohn (Aleta.Hohn@noaa.gov)

Rich Bandy (Richard.Bandy@noaa.gov)

Participants:

Carolyn Currin – NOAA, NCCOS, Center for Coastal Fisheries and Habitat Research

Rebecca Ellin – N.C. Coastal Reserve and National Estuarine Research Reserve

Whitney Jenkins – N.C. Coastal Reserve and National Estuarine Research Reserve

Dave Meyer – NOAA, NMFS, Center for Coastal Fisheries and Habitat Research

Tancred Miller – N.C. Division of Coastal Management

Karsten Shein – NOAA, National Climatic Data Center

Other partners include: Sentinel Site Cooperative Core Management Team; NOAA, National Weather Service; NOAA, NOS; NOAA, NMFS; NOAA, NESDIS (National Climatic Data Center/SSP Liaison); North Carolina Department of Coastal Management; North Carolina Coastal Reserve and National Estuarine Research Reserve; University of North Carolina Wilmington; N.C. Sea Grant and Water Resources Research Institute.

Summary:

The North Carolina Sentinel Site Cooperative (NCSSC) is one of only four NOAA Sentinel Sites in the US, and the sites are considered a NOAA priority. The NCSSC mission is to work collaboratively and leverage resources across partners to provide research, monitoring, and information for addressing coastal resiliency concerns such as flooding, inundation, and sea level rise. SECART has supported the NCSSC since its inception. SECART participates on the Core Management Team and will continue to work with NCSSC to facilitate transferability of the science and application of the NCSSC to other areas in the region.

In previous years, SECART supported a Research and Monitoring Coordination Workshop, during which participants identified as high priority the development of an atlas of sea level rise and resilience projects conducted within the NCSSC boundary and development of the NC Data Atlas. SECART then supported (in FY15) development of the Atlas. In excess of eighty relevant projects have been identified and catalogued in the Atlas.

For FY16, SECART will support, utilizing supplemental funding from NMFS SERO, further development of the NC Coastal Atlas. The NCSSC strives to increase understanding of sea level rise impacts and the need for resilient communities that have the tools and resources they need to make decisions. Development of the Atlas will enable the NCSSC to highlight the breadth of research being conducted within the Cooperative boundary as well as how results can be used to support coastal decision making.

SECART will also support, via supplemental funds from NMFS SERO, signage at the NC Aquarium at Pine Knolls Shores, NC that explains to the general public some of the marsh research and monitoring work underway, particularly Surface Elevation Tables (SETs) to study changes in marsh elevation and sea level rise. This is an excellent opportunity to increase the general public's understanding of marsh ecosystems and their ecosystem services, and showcase the monitoring and its relevancy for promoting coastal resiliency. Interpretive signs will be located at key locations along the sound side trail at the Aquarium adjacent to the monitoring transects.

Objectives:

- Support data discovery and access for environmental datasets to the North Carolina Coastal Data Atlas.
- Support development of interactive signage at the North Carolina Aquariums describing the use of Surface Elevation Tables (SETs) to study changes in marsh elevation and sea level rise.

Cost/Funding Source: \$0 of SECART funds. \$8000 of supplemental funding from SERO to support NC Data Atlas data discovery and access (\$5000) and signage at the NC Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores (\$3000).

SECART Goals/Objectives Met:

Goal 2: Enhance awareness of risks to living marine resources and habitats.

- Objective 1: Improve regional awareness of impacts from climate variability, including extreme weather events, on natural systems

Key Milestones/Tasks:

- Review and provide letters of support for proposals submitted in response to the 2015 NOAA Ecological Effects of Sea Level Rise FFO and the NOAA Climate Program Office Coastal and Ocean Climate Applications (COCA) FFO; the funding priority for these FFOs will be for research conducted in Sentinel Sites (Q1)
- Meet with NC Coastal Atlas staff to discuss how to include Cooperative information in the bibliography function of the atlas. (Q1)

- Promote NCSSC at formal and informal meetings and symposia. (Q1-4)
- Update inventory of research conducted within the Sentinel Site, including trying to add new participants. (Q2)
- Update the NCSSC one-pager for use in communicating the existence of, goals, and activities of the NCSSC. (Q2)
- Review and update the NCSSC Implementation Plan and work plan (Q3)

Activity C4. Identify priorities in ecoforecasting goals for Southeast US related to fisheries ecosystems.

SECART Lead(s):

Scott Cross (Scott.Cross@noaa.gov)

Debra Hernandez (debra@secoora.org)

Summary:

The overall objective of this activity is to open and maintain lines of communication: (1) between potential regional consumers and producers of EFR products and the EFR Forecast Teams so that the consumers understand the products/potential products and the regional producers and EFR Forecast Teams understand the regional needs; and (2) between regional research and observing entities and EFR Forecast Teams, so that the EFR teams may make better use of regional capabilities. Towards this end over the last two years, SECOORA has hosted a webinar with EFR leadership and regional experts to exchange information about EFR goals and regional capabilities (2014), and SECART has hosted a presentation by the EFR Habitat Team lead on that team's priorities and approaches (2015). The focus this year is to document regional requirements for ecosystem forecast products, and to facilitate the flow of that information from the region to the NOAA EFR community.

Of the four established EFR forecast teams, the Pathogens and Habitat teams are likely the most relevant in the SECART geography, with HABs and coastal hypoxia as secondary concerns. The approach will take advantage of recent and ongoing regional coordination activities through efforts like SECOORA's climate and fisheries workshop, the ongoing Southeast and Coastal Ocean Acidification Network (SOCAN), and the GSAA Healthy Ecosystems group to capture regional needs for forecast information. Compiled and prioritized needs will be presented at the annual NOAA EFR workshop and/or conveyed to EFR leadership as appropriate.

The Southeast Ocean and Coastal Acidification Network (SOCAN) has been established to support and encourage discussions on ocean and coastal acidification in the Southeast region. SOCAN will enhance collaborations and communications throughout the region about ocean and coastal acidification regional drivers; approaches to monitoring; state-of-the science; and vulnerable species and ecosystems; among other concerns. SOCAN is a regional implementation of NOAA's Ocean Acidification Program and is facilitated by SECOORA.

The SOCAN Steering Committee will be meeting in Charleston, SC, January 12-13, 2016. The purpose of this workshop is to establish the foundation for a state of the science paper on ocean

acidification in the SE, and to plan SOCAN activities for 2016. Outcomes will include identifying research and outreach priorities, which will be shared with SECART.

Objectives:

- Identify potential regional, i.e. local, state and federal, users of Ecological Forecast products and their requirements
- Identify regional and federal capacities and products
- Prioritize regional needs
- Provide support for the SOCAN Steering Committee in January 2016.

Cost/Funding Source: \$3000 of SECART funds to support Ecoforecasting related travel of team members or other ecoforecasting related support as needed in the region.

SECART Goals/Objectives Met:

Goal 2: Enhance awareness of risks to living marine resources and habitats.

- Objective 2: Identify and prioritize emerging regional needs for NOAA ecological modeling and forecast tools with a focus on waterborne pathogens and health of biological communities.

Key Milestones/Deliverables and Tasks:

- Host one or more webinars involving regional management community, regional scientists and NOAA EFR theme teams to identify emerging priorities, particularly related to habitats and pathogens. (Q2-4)

Activity C5. Ocean noise and passive acoustic/soundscape monitoring in the Southeast and Caribbean Region

SECART Leads(s):

Chris Taylor (Chris.Taylor@noaa.gov)

Sarah Fangman (Sarah.Fangman@noaa.gov)

Partners:

Scott Noakes

Melissa Soldevilla

Betsy Nicholson

Leila Hatch

Jason Gedamke

Summary:

Many marine organisms use sound for communication, feeding and migration; yet we have a limited understanding of the ocean “soundscapes”. There is growing concern within coastal communities over the potential environmental impacts from proposed seismic surveys for oil and gas exploration and other sources of anthropogenic ocean noise along the Atlantic coastal states.

Several targeted monitoring and research studies have established short or long term underwater recording stations to document and detect ambient sounds, and particularly those made by marine mammals. These recordings also include sounds made by human activities . An inventory of available instrumentation and monitoring would facilitate collaboration and coordination among researchers and promote information sharing and potentially facilitate instrument sharing as well.

Objectives:

- Develop Google spreadsheet (with NART) including fields and contact information for inventory of past or ongoing ocean noise monitoring efforts in the SE US estuaries, coastal ocean and EEZ
- Distribute request (by email) for information on passive acoustic, ocean noise, and other soundscape monitoring activities in the SE US coastal ocean (and estuaries) and US Caribbean

Cost/Funding Source:

In kind

SECART Goals/Objectives Met:

Goal 1: Improve coordination and focus of coastal and marine habitat conservations and restoration.

- Objective 1: Improve coordination among NOAA entities and partners to identify capabilities and efficiencies in achieving regional priorities in resource management and conservation.

Key Milestones/Deliverables:

- FY2016 Q2: Email distributed to SECART members for distribution to home office and colleagues. Managed distribution to academic partners.
- FY2016 Q4: Collate responses in spreadsheet and share with SECART and NART as well as NOAA Acoustics Coordination team.

Section III. Appendices

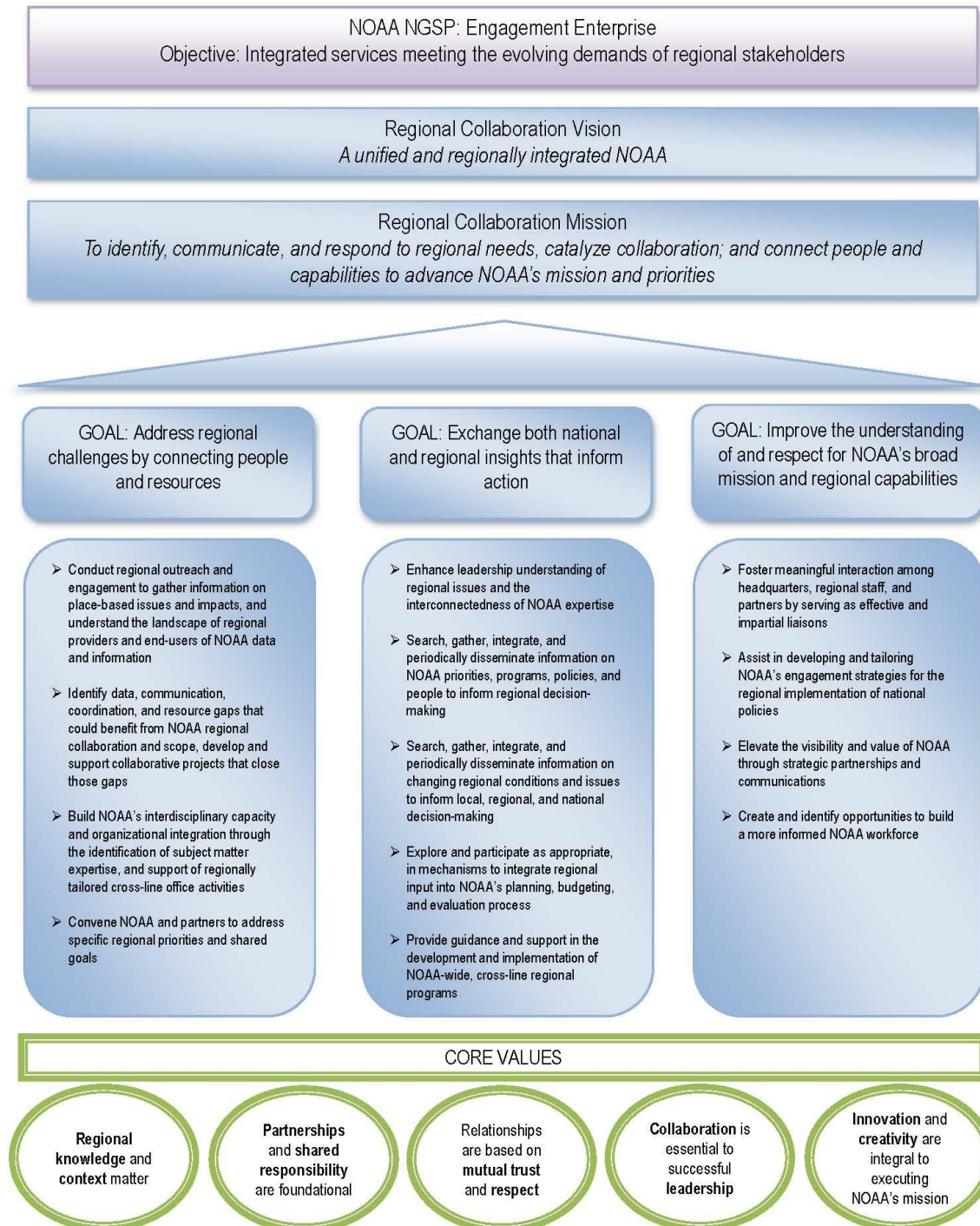
Appendix 1. Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team Membership

(Dec 2014)

Name	Affiliation	Location	E-mail
Bandy, Rich	NWS	Newport, NC	Richard.Bandy@noaa.gov
Brown, David	NESDIS	Ft. Worth, TX	David.P.Brown@noaa.gov
Cross, Scott	NESDIS	Charleston, SC	Scott.Cross@noaa.gov
Fangman, Sarah	NOS	Savannah, GA	Sarah.fangman@noaa.gov
Fay, Ginny	NMFS	St. Petersburg, FL	Virginia.Fay@noaa.gov
Gane, Brad	GA DNR	Brunswick, GA	Brad.Gane@dnr.state.ga.us
Garcia, Roberto	NWS	San Juan, PR	Roberto.Garcia@noaa.gov
Havens, Karl	FL Sea Grant	Gainesville, GA	KHavens@ufl.edu
Hernandez, Debra	SECOORA	Charleston, SC	Debra@secoora.org
Hohn, Aleta	NMFS	Beaufort, NC	Aleta.Hohn@noaa.gov
Kearns, Ed	NESDIS	Asheville, NC	Ed.Kearns@noaa.gov
Leonardi, Alan	OAR	Silver Spring, MD	Alan.Leonardi@noaa.gov
Lokken, Scott	NOS	Raleigh, NC	Scott.Lokken@noaa.gov
Mecray, Ellen	NESDIS	Bohema, NY	Ellen.Mecray@noaa.gov
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Appendix 2. Regional Collaboration Strategy Map.

Regional Collaboration Strategy Map 2015-2020



Appendix 3. SECART FY15-18 Strategic Priorities

NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team FY15 - FY18 Strategic Priorities

Through engagement, integration, and innovation, NOAA's Regional Collaboration network improves cooperation among the NOAA Line Offices and partner entities to more effectively address our shared regional challenges and respond to emerging opportunities. Regional Collaboration expands on existing coordination and communication efforts by enhancing program integration activities to address NOAA's priorities at regional scales, thereby improving productivity and value to constituents. NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team (SECART) network creates means for people to engage at a regional scale (NC, SC, GA, FL, PR, and USVI) and invites new approaches to develop products and services that are responsive to the region's changing economy and environment. This strategy identifies SECART's three priority areas for action over the period FY15-18 and is responsive to NOAA's Strategic Plan and the Regional Collaboration Network Strategy.

Priority Area: Improve efficiency and effectiveness of NOAA's mission execution through enhanced collaboration across NOAA line offices and with partners.

Goal 1: Address regional priorities by connecting people and resources.

- Identify information, communication, coordination, and resource gaps and identify solutions for closing the gaps;
- Understand the capabilities of NOAA and its partners within the region and facilitate bringing those capabilities to bear on priority issues, consistent with NOAA's mission;
- Convene NOAA and partners together to address specific regional priorities;
- Support and engage regional partnerships to efficiently address shared goals.

Goal 2: Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action.

- Understand regional issues and needs and transmit that information to inform NOAA program planning;
- Enhance NOAA leadership's understanding of the region's issues and NOAA capabilities in the region;
- Help regional staff and partners understand NOAA's mission, goals, capabilities and constraints;
- Provide guidance and support in the development and implementation of NOAA-wide regional programs.

Goal 3: Improve awareness of NOAA's broad mission responsibilities and regional capabilities to achieve an understanding of, and respect for, the totality of NOAA's work.

- Elevate the awareness and value of NOAA through strategic partnerships, outreach, and communication;
- Build NOAA's interdisciplinary capacity and organizational integration;

- Improve leadership's understanding of the capabilities and interconnectedness of NOAA expertise in the region;
- Assist in developing and tailoring engagement strategies for the regional implementation of national priorities.

Priority Area: Improve Resilience of Communities to Extreme Events and Climate Change

Goal 1: Facilitate the development of emerging science and technology solutions to enable regional stakeholders to better plan for and respond to the risks posed by hazards and climate change.

- Collect, analyze, and evaluate the resiliency related needs of partners and users in the region to inform and focus research and development efforts to help address the issues;
- Connect people and resources to enhance existing and develop new products and services;
- Encourage and facilitate the transition of research to develop societally relevant applications.

Goal 2: Facilitate the application of products, services, and knowledge to enhance the capacity of communities to understand, plan for, and respond to risks posed by extreme events and climate change.

- Target outreach and communication efforts to facilitate delivery of resilience-relevant information to communities;
- Facilitate the application of science and tools in communities to assist with risk identification and the development of mitigation and adaptation strategies;
- Promote the effective implementation of built and natural solutions by bringing NOAA tools and resources to partners.

Goal 3: Enhance organizational awareness and coordination within the region to improve response to a natural or man-made disaster.

- Identify agency capabilities within the region for response to disasters;
- Improve communication among appropriate NOAA entities both within and outside the region for a better understanding of capabilities and roles during a disaster response.

Priority Area: Promote the sustainability of the region's living marine resources and the habitats upon which they depend

Goal 1: Improve coordination and focus of coastal and marine habitat conservation and restoration.

- Improve coordination among NOAA entities and partners to identify capabilities and efficiencies in achieving regional priorities in resource management and conservation;
- Improve awareness of NOAA's mapping activities in the region and access to mapping products;

- Promote development of tools to identify emerging habitat mapping priorities for NOAA programs and partners;
- Promote NOAA's Habitat Blueprint Framework and regional habitat conservation initiatives in the Southeast US and Caribbean.

Goal 2: Enhance awareness of risks to living marine resources and habitats

- Improve regional awareness of impacts from climate variability, including extreme weather events, on natural systems;
- Identify and prioritize emerging regional needs for NOAA ecological modeling and forecasts with a focus on harmful algal blooms, hypoxia, waterborne pathogens, or health of biological communities.

Appendix 4. SECART FY2016 Spend Plan

	SECART Funds	Supplementary funding
Priority: Improve efficiency and effectiveness of NOAA's mission execution through enhanced collaboration across NOAA offices and with partners.		
Goal: Address regional priorities by connecting people and resources.		
Activity A1. Advance NOAA's mission through strategic engagement with regional partnerships	2500	
Activity A2. Advance NOAA's mission through engagement with the NOAA in the Caribbean Collaborative and promote implementation of the NOAA Caribbean Strategy.	7500	2000
Goal: Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action		
Goal: Improve awareness of NOAA's broad mission responsibilities and regional capabilities to achieve an understanding of, and respect for, the totality of NOAA's work.		
Activity A3. Represent NOAA's broad mission capabilities and accomplishments in the region and facilitate two-way flow of information between the region and NOAA leadership. Conduct a "congressional roundtable" briefing in Miami area and possibly a second in coastal NC.	5000	
Activity A4. Enhance the capacity of the SECART to lead organizational integration within the region.	14,000	
Activity A5. Improve the capacity of NOAA's inter-regional and national integrated services	4000	
Priority: Community resilience to extreme events and climate change		
Goal: Facilitate the development of emerging science and technology solutions to enable regional stakeholders to better plan for and respond to the risks posed by hazards and climate change.		
Activity B1. Completion of SECART/Sea Grant Storm Surge Measurement Project - two workshops left to do; Charleston, Ft. Pierce	3600	2,500
Goal: Facilitate the application of products, services, and knowledge to enhance the capacity of communities to understand, plan for, and respond to risks posed by hazards and climate change.		
Activity B2. Hurricane/Resiliency Webinar Series (hurricanes, hazards, ENSO)	0	
Activity B3. Engage and Support Climate Community of Practice (support of SECART travel to workshop),	2100	20000

Goal: Enhance organizational awareness and coordination within the region to improve response to a natural or man-made disaster.		
Activity B4. Improving Inter-NOAA Communication and Understanding of Responses to large scale disasters within the SECART Region	800	
Priority: Promote the sustainability of the region's living marine resources and the habitats upon which they depend.		
Goal: Improve coordination and focus of coastal and marine habitat conservation and restoration		
Activity C1. Improve coordination of benthic habitat mapping prioritization, planning and activities by NOAA and partners in the Southeast US-Workshop	7,500	2500
Activity C2. Support selection, rollout, and implementation of Habitat Blueprint Focal Areas in SE and Caribbean	0	1500
Goal: Enhance awareness of risks to living marine resources and habitats		
Activity C3. Support the North Carolina Sentinel Site Cooperative - 1) support contractor to research and access data sets;	0	8000
Activity C4. Identify priorities in eco-forecasting goals for SE US related to fisheries ecosystems	3000	
Activity C5. Ocean noise and passive acoustic/soundscape monitoring in the Southeast and Caribbean Region	0	
TOTAL	50,000	35,000